



What's Happening in Houston's Theater District

April 2010

THE GERSHWIN SONGBOOK

April 1-3 (Times vary)

Houston Symphony

"I Got Rhythm." "They Can't Take That Away From Me." "Our Love Is Here To Stay." Remember dancing to your favorite Gershwin tunes with guitarist and vocalist John Pizzarelli. "S Wonderful!"

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$29 - \$122

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

DANCE SALAD FESTIVAL

April 1-3 (7:30 pm each day)

Houston International Dance Coalition

The much anticipated annual Dance Salad Festival returns! Each curated performance presents a roster of outstanding dancers and choreography from around the world. Among those coming to Houston exclusively for Dance Salad Festival are The Royal Ballet of Flanders, Antwerp, Belgium; Norwegian National Ballet, Oslo, Norway; Ballet de Lorraine, France; Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève, Switzerland; Hungarian National Ballet, Hungary; Compañía Nacional de Danza, Mexico; Jacoby & Pronk, New York/Amsterdam and others.

Wortham Center's Cullen Theater

Tickets: \$19 - \$47

(877) 772-5425 / dancesalad.org

IMAGINARY SCENES

April 3 (7:30 pm)

Musiqua

The Houston Ballet Academy and Musiqua present an enchanting evening of music and dance, with works by Al-Sand and Smith (world premiere) and Stanton Welch's ballet "Fingerprints," with score by Hamza El Din.

Hobby Center's Zilkha Hall

Tickets: \$16 - \$32

(713) 315-2525 / musiqahouston.org

IN THE HEIGHTS

April 6-18 (Times vary)

Broadway Across America

IN THE HEIGHTS, winner of four 2008 Tony Awards including BEST MUSICAL!, is a sensational new show about chasing your dreams and finding your true home.

With an amazing cast, incredible Tony Award-winning dancing and a thrilling Tony Award-winning score, IN THE HEIGHTS is an exhilarating journey into a vibrant Manhattan community - a place where the coffee is light and sweet, the windows are always open, and the breeze carries the rhythm of three generations of music.

Experience the next chapter of the classic American story at the most joyous, exciting and award-winning new musical on Broadway. Find out what it takes to make a living, what it costs to have a dream, and what it means to be home...IN THE HEIGHTS.

Hobby Center's Sarofim Hall

Tickets: \$26 - \$75

(800) 745-3000 / broadwayacrossamerica.com

A LITTLE DAY MUSIC

April 7 (Noon)

Da Camera of Houston

A *Little Day Music* concerts fulfill an important aspect of Da Camera's mission to develop the audience for chamber music and jazz by making it accessible to everyone and part of everyday life. Downtown workers, schools, seniors and day care centers are among the many who enjoy Da Camera's free lunchtime concerts on the first Wednesday of each month, October through May, at noon in the lobby of the Wortham Theater Center. Bring your lunch and enjoy the wide variety of artists and ensembles presented this season. The April concert is a Jazz and poetry program featuring pianist Jose Miguel Yamal.

Wortham Center's Grand Foyer

Tickets: Free

(713) 524-5050 / dacamera.com

SHOSTAKOVICH'S FIFTH

April 8-11 (Times vary)

Houston Symphony

Shostakovich wrote, "The theme of my Fifth Symphony is the making of a man. I saw man with all his experiences in the center of the composition . . . In the finale the tragically tense impulses of the earlier movements are resolved in optimism and joy of living."

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$29 - \$116

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR

April 9 (8:00 pm)

Society for the Performing Arts

Direct from South Africa, the 26-member Soweto Gospel Choir is an awe-inspiring vocal ensemble, performing in six different languages, in a stunning program of tribal, traditional and popular African gospel music as well as other inspiring songs. Earthy rhythms, rich harmonies, a cappella and charismatic performances combine to uplift the soul and express South Africa's great hopes for the future.

Under the direction of notable choirmaster David Mulovhedzi and South African Director and Executive Producer Beverly Bryer, the Soweto Gospel Choir, draws on the best talent from the many churches and communities in and around Soweto. Since the Choir began touring internationally in early 2003, they have performed to nightly standing ovations, sold-out houses and rave reviews.

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$22 - \$52

(713) 227-4SPA / spahouston.org

THE FULL MONTY

April 9-18 (Times vary)

Masquerade Theatre

The adaptation of the 1997 film into a Broadway musical has thrilled audiences worldwide, and now we bring it to you live on the Masquerade stage - *The Full Monty*! The steel mills of Buffalo have all closed. Blue-collar single father Jerry Lukowski and his hopelessly overweight best friend Dave Bukatinsky have been laid off along with dozens of other mill workers, leaving them without jobs, without hope and without confidence. It's not until a chance encounter with the Chippendales-style dancer that their wives have been raving about that Jerry hits on an idea to make money and win back a little pride... if the ladies are so thrilled by a fantasy like Keno the dancer, wouldn't they go nuts over "real men" like Jerry and Dave strutting their stuff as members of amateur strip act "Hot Metal"? We at The Masquerade Theatre know that you'll go nuts over songs like "Scrap", "Big A** Rock", "Breeze On The River" and "Let It Go"... so get your dollar bills ready, and join Hot Metal for the laugh-riot feel-good ride of your life!

Hobby Center's Zilkha Hall

Tickets: \$36.25 - \$66.25

(713) 315-2525 / masqueradetheatre.com

SECOND SATURDAY BOAT CRUISE

April 10 (10:00 am)

Buffalo Bayou Partnership

These 30-minute boat rides are a great way to spend the afternoon with your family. Escape from the city and enjoy the cool breeze as you glide along the bayou's waters. Look for graceful herons, jumping fish, and even the occasional alligator sunning on the bayou's banks. After your cruise, enjoy a picnic lunch on the Sabine Promenade grounds.

No reservations necessary (20 person capacity per trip). Boat picks up at Sabine Street Bridge North Boat Landing. Children under 4 are not permitted.

Sabine Promenade

Tickets: \$5 - \$7 (cash only)

(713) 752-0314 / buffalobayou.org

INTERPRETI VENEZIANI

April 11 (7:30 pm)

Society for the Performing Arts

Sitting in a semicircle and playing music in a lively conversation, this nine-member string ensemble performs more than 350 concerts a year in Venice at the San Vidal Church, where Vivaldi used to play. Now the group sprinkles Venetian magic wherever they tour. From the Bayreuth Festival to the Tokyo Suntory Hall, audiences and critics alike have applauded the Interpreti Veneziani for the high level of their playing and their expertise as soloists and ensemble musicians. Their Houston debut program features Vivaldi's The Four Seasons, Paganini's La Campanella, Handel's Concerto Grosso, and Preludio e Allegro by Pugnani/Kreisler.

The Interpreti Veneziani made their debut in 1987, immediately gaining a reputation for the youthful exuberance and all-Italian brio characterizing their performances. Their important achievements include appearances in the Bayreuth Festival, concerts at Stockholm's Royal Palace, participation in the World Vision telemarathon at the Kirov Theatre to mark the reinstatement of the name St. Petersburg, a concert at the Osaka Symphony Hall in live broadcast for Japanese radio, concerts at the Tokyo Suntory Hall and Kji Hall and appearances in glamorous concert seasons such as those of Sapporo and Yokohama during four tours of Japan.

Wortham Center's Cullen Theater

Tickets: \$22 - \$47

(713) 227-4SPA / spahouston.org

DORIANNE LAUX AND PATRICIA SMITH

April 12 (7:30 pm)

Inprint

DORIANNE LAUX, before becoming an award-winning poet, worked as a sanatorium cook, a gas station manager, a maid, and a donut holer. Tony Hoagland calls her work the poetry of "one who looks clearly, passionately, and affectionately at rites of passage, motherhood, the life of work, sisterhood, and especially sexual love, in a celebratory fashion." Publishers Weekly says, "Laux works in the idiom of Philip Levine and Sharon Olds, yet Laux's best verse is perhaps more surprising than theirs." She is the author of four volumes of poetry, including Smoke, Awake, and Facts About the Moon, which was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award, as was an earlier collection, What We Carry. She is also the author, with Kim Addonizio, of The Poet's Companion: A Guide to the Pleasures of Writing Poetry.

PATRICIA SMITH, as well-known on the stage as on the page, is a four-time winner of the National Poetry Slam, the most successful slammer to date. Smith's fifth collection of poetry, Blood Dazzler, a National Book Award finalist and named one of NPR's Top 5 books for 2008, is "a towering testament to the tragedy of New Orleans before, during, and after Katrina" (Booklist). Terrance Hayes says, "Smith is herself a storm of beautiful, frightening talent. Her words will wash you or wash you away. I consider this new book a major literary event." Smith's earlier collection, Teahouse of the Almighty, was selected for the National Poetry Series and was awarded the first ever Hurston/Wright Legacy Award. She was also featured in the film, Slamnation, on the HBO series, Def Poetry Jam.

Alley Theatre's Neuhaus Stage

Tickets: \$5 (On sale March 22)

(713) 521-2026 / inprintheouston.org

ESCHENBACH AND LANG LANG

April 14 (8:00 pm)

Houston Symphony

When two incandescent musicians combine, the result is electrifying. Christoph Eschenbach returns to Houston for the first time in eight years.

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$40 - \$145

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

OWL CITY

April 16 (7:00 pm)

Verizon Wireless Theater

Tickets: \$20

(713) 230-1600 / livenation.com

ACADEMY SPRING SHOWCASE

April 16-17 (Times vary)

Houston Ballet

The gifted young artists of Houston Ballet's Ben Stevenson Academy, the company's professional training wing, cap their studies with two performances of a program featuring works tailor-made to show them at their best.

Wortham Center's Cullen Theater

Tickets: \$38 - \$48

(713) 227-ARTS / houstonballet.org

FRANCK'S SYMPHONY IN D MINOR

April 16-18 (Times vary)

Houston Symphony

In Franck's greatest creation, you'll hear achingly beautiful melody with luxuriant harmony, repeatedly transformed into one emotion after another.

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$29 - \$116

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

THE QUEEN OF SPADES

April 16 – May 1 (Times vary)

Houston Grand Opera

One man's obsession with a lucky card trick turns the fates of three in Tchaikovsky's vibrant melodrama. Russian tenor Vladimir Galouzine returns to HGO as the tormented Hermann, internationally renowned soprano Tatiana Monogarova makes her HGO debut as his beloved Lisa, and Vasily Ladyuk is the dashing Prince Yeletsky. Canadian mezzo-soprano Judith Forst is the keeper of the fated secret. This award-winning production is a visual treat with imaginative puppets and mixed-period costumes. Italian maestro Carlo Rizzi conducts.

Performance Timing: 3 hours, 20 minutes including 2 intermissions

Wortham Center's Brown Theater

Tickets: \$23 - \$200

(713) 228-6737 / houstongrandopera.org

HARVEY

April 16 – May 9 (Times vary)

Alley Theatre

Affable Elwood P. Dowd has a kind word for everyone he meets. He lives a quiet life with his social-climbing sister and her daughter and is devoted to his loyal and trustworthy friend and constant companion, Harvey. The fact that Harvey happens to be a six-foot invisible rabbit doesn't seem to bother Elwood but is an ongoing embarrassment to his family who decides to have him committed. In this Pulitzer Prize-winning comedy, the medical establishment is turned topsy-turvy as Elwood and Harvey cause pandemonium. *Recommended for general audiences.*

Hubbard Stage

Tickets: \$21 - \$70

(713) 220-5700 / alleytheatre.org

OWL CITY

April 16 (7:00 pm)

Verizon Wireless Theater

Tickets: \$20

(713) 230-1600 / livenation.com

BACH IN THE SADDLE AGAIN: AN EVENING WITH P.D.Q. BACH

April 20 (7:30 pm)

Society for the Performing Arts

Since 1965 the tireless Professor Peter Schickele has kept audiences in stitches with the music of P.D.Q. Bach, the most dangerous musician since Nero. The Professor has appeared with over fifty orchestras including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, and the London Symphony Orchestra. On this occasion he joins the Houston Chamber Choir on stage for performances including the Knock, Knock Cantata, The Ground Round and the Liebeslieder Polkas.

Wortham Center's Cullen Theater

Tickets: \$25 - \$55

(713) 224-5566 / houstonchamberchoir.org

HECTOR BERLIOZ' SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE

April 22-25 (Times vary)

Houston Symphony

Berlioz' Symphonie fantastique, an "Episode in the Life of an Artist," careens from despair through passion to a psychedelic vision.

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$29 - \$116

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

FRANKIE VALLI AND THE FOUR SEASONS

April 23 (7:30 pm)

Houston Symphony

The Tony® Award-winning Broadway musical *Jersey Boys* portrayed the lives of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons to international acclaim. Now hear them live with the Houston Symphony singing "Sherry," "Big Girls Don't Cry," "Walk Like a Man" and "Oh, What a Night."

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$45 - \$175

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

ASZURE BARTON & ARTISTS

April 23 (8:00 pm)

Society for the Performing Arts

Brilliant Canadian choreographer Aszure Barton has burst on the scene with "works that are quirky, deep, cheeky, and poignant," says *The Globe and Mail*. Mikhail Baryshnikov calls her dances "extraordinary" and "uncompromising." She has choreographed for Sydney Dance Company, Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal, The Juilliard School, films, and the Broadway stage. Now she brings her own company of consummate, dazzling dancers to Houston in her latest work *Busk*, set to Russian composer Ljova's gypsy-inspired score, and *Blue Soup*, a collage of highlights from recent works, including *A Travelling Show*, *Mais Oui*, and *Come In*.

Aszure Barton and Artists is an organization dedicated to the growth of artists and production of contemporary dance performance. Since its founding in 2002, the company has developed its activities as an international contemporary dance project based in New York City. With her intimate ensemble, Aszure Barton continues to develop critically acclaimed productions around the globe. These works have toured to Europe, Brazil, Argentina, Asia, Africa, Canada, and the United States.

Wortham Center's Cullen Theater

Tickets: \$22 - \$47

(713) 227-4SPA / spahouston.org

CHELSEA HANDLER: CHELSEA CHELSEA BANG BANG

April 23 (8:00 pm)

Verizon Wireless Theater

Tickets: \$42.50 - \$72.50

(713) 230-1600 / livenation.com

LIVE AFTER FIVE

April 23 (5:00 pm)

Across the Board Entertainment

Entertainment TBA

Jones Plaza

Tickets: Free

KMJQ.com

JEFF BECK

April 24 (8:00 pm)

Verizon Wireless Theater

Tickets: \$39 - \$69

(713) 230-1600 / livenation.com

CHOO CHOO SOUL

April 25 (1:00 pm)

Verizon Wireless Theater

Tickets: \$20 - \$25

(713) 230-1600 / livenation.com

ESPERANZA SPALDING

April 24 (8:00 pm)

Da Camera of Houston

If "esperanza" is the Spanish word for hope, then bassist, vocalist and composer Esperanza Spalding could not have been given a more fitting name at birth. The 23-year-old prodigy is blessed with uncanny instrumental chops, a multi-lingual voice that is part angel and part siren, and a natural beauty that borders on the hypnotic.

"Those following jazz ought to keep an ear on the bassist Esperanza Spalding, who is going about things her own way...The Esperanza Spalding experience is light, melodic, joyful, always sort of minimalist and airborne."

—Ben Ratliff, *The New York Times*

Wortham Center's Cullen Theater

Tickets: \$30 - \$50

(713) 524-5050 / dacamera.com

DAVID SEDARIS

April 28 (8:00 pm)

Society for the Performing Arts

With sardonic wit and incisive social critiques, David Sedaris has become one of America's pre-eminent humor writers. The great skill with which he slices through cultural euphemisms and political correctness proves that Sedaris is a master of satire and one of the most observant writers addressing the human condition today.

David Sedaris is the author of the bestsellers *Barrel Fever* and *Holidays on Ice*, as well as collections of personal essays, *Naked*, *Me Talk Pretty One Day*, and *Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim*, each of which became immediate bestsellers. There are a total of seven million copies of his books in print and they have been translated into 25 languages. He is the editor of an anthology of stories, *Children Playing Before a Statue of Hercules: An Anthology of Outstanding Stories*. His essays appear regularly in *Esquire* and *The New Yorker*. Sedaris and his sister, Amy Sedaris, have collaborated under the name "The Talent Family" and have written several plays which have been produced at La Mama, Lincoln Center, and The Drama Department in New York City. These plays include *Stump the Host*, *Stitches*, *One Woman Shoe*, which received an Obie Award, *Incident at Cobbler's Knob*, and *The Book of Liz*, which was published in book form by Dramatist's Play Service. His recent collection of essays, titled *When You Are Engulfed in Flames*, was published in June 2008. *Adult content.*

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$22 - \$57

(713) 227-4SPA / spahouston.org

LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE

April 28 – May 9 (Times vary)

Theatre Under the Stars

Little House on the Prairie has remained one of the most popular and beloved celebrations of early Americana since the appearance of Laura Ingalls Wilder's popular classic book series 70 years ago. Now the inspirational stories take on a brand new frontier in an uplifting new musical. Melissa Gilbert, who played Laura for 10 years in the much loved television series, continues her legacy by starring as Ma. Families will continue to fall in love with these life affirming stories about the Ingalls' struggles and triumphs through the celebration of the pioneering spirit and the core values on which this country was founded — a spirit that resonates within each of us today.

Hobby Center's Sarofim Hall

Tickets: Start at \$24

(713) 558-8887 / tuts.com

PINK MARTINI

April 30 – May 2 (Times vary)

Houston Symphony

Pink Martini returns to delight you with their refreshing blend of classical, jazz, Latin and Parisian cabaret music. Always fun and fresh, Pink Martini will perform a new set of songs you're sure to love.

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$29 - \$122

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

PHOENIX

April 30 (8:00 pm)

Verizon Wireless Theater

Tickets: \$27.50

(713) 230-1600 / livenation.com

XERXES

April 30 – May 2 (Times vary)

Houston Grand Opera

One of Handel's most popular operas, *Xerxes* is a feast for the ears, and the eyes in this classic eighteenth-century production. A mad entanglement of love stories, the opera follows the tyrannical and flamboyant *Xerxes* (Susan Graham) in his quest for *Romilda* (Laura Claycomb), who is beloved by his very own brother *Arsamene*, sung by David Daniels. Contralto *Sonia Prina*, soprano *Heidi Stober* and baritone *Philip Cutlip* round out the all-star cast. The award-winning production is set in an English pleasure garden—the perfect place for an elaborate lovers' chase!

Performance Timing: 3 hours, 35 minutes including 2 intermissions

Wortham Center's Brown Theater

Tickets: \$23 - \$200

(713) 228-6737 / houstongrandopera.org

